

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West



Photo Credit: Winetta Owens

Mormon Island, located just east of Folsom, Calif., was once a thriving mining community settled in 1848 by Mormon immigrants seeking their fortune along the American River during the California Gold Rush. At its peak in 1853, the community was home to some 2,500 residents and boasted four hotels, at least eight stores, one school and seven saloons. Much of the town was destroyed by a fire in 1856 and never rebuilt. The site was inundated by Folsom Lake in 1955.

Today at that spot stands the Mormon Island Auxiliary Dam (MIAD), an earthfill embankment dam built in 1953 that is 110 feet tall and 4,820 feet long at the crest. MIAD is part of the “Folsom Facility,” which includes Folsom Dam and eight earthfill dikes that impound Folsom Reservoir. Part of the Central Valley Project, the Folsom Facility was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1948 and 1956 and then transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation.

Phase 2 of the Safety of Dams modifications to MIAD is underway. The work includes the overlay of material on MIAD’s downstream embankment and the installation of filters and drains to help strengthen the dam from earthquakes. Work began in fall 2013 and will be completed in spring 2016.

For more information on Mormon Island Auxiliary Dam:

<http://www.usbr.gov/mp/jfp/mormon/presentations/MIAD%20FY2009%20HISTORY.pdf>

http://www.usbr.gov/projects/Facility.jsp?fac_Name=Mormon+Island+Auxilliary+Dam

<http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=43746>

http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=3472

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